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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/648,720	08/25/2000	Mark E. Redding	230074.0228	7459

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EXAMINER

BLAIR, DOUGLAS B

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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2142

DATE MAILED: 12/16/2003

4

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

1926

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	09/648,720	REDDING ET AL.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Douglas B Blair	2142	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 25 August 2000.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-29 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-29 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) 2 and 3. 6) ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Objections

1. Claim 11 is objected to because of the following informalities: in line 3 of claim 11 one of the words "added" or "communicated" is unnecessary. Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

2. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

3. Claims 1 and 16-29 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.
4. Claim 1 recites the limitation "if that particular license server *did not have* a sufficient number of allocations" in line 9 of claim 1. There is insufficient antecedent basis for this limitation in the claim. It is unclear when this past tense situation was to have occurred.
5. Claim 16 recites the limitation "that particular license server *did not have* a sufficient number of allocations" in lines 7 and 8 of claim 16. There is insufficient antecedent basis for this limitation in the claim. It is unclear when this past tense situation was to have occurred.
6. As to claims 17-29, it is unclear from the preambles how a step can include another step. It is suggested that the limitations of claims 17-29 could be part of the step of updating.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

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7. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

8. Claims 1, 16, and 18 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent Number 6,189,146 to Misra et al..

9. As to claim 1, Misra teaches a system for balancing a distribution of allocations for protected software over a communication network according to a license policy, the system comprising: at least one client computer coupled to the communication network for requesting authorizations to use the protected software (col. 4, lines 21-30); and a pool of license servers coupled to the communication network, each license server programmed for managing a distribution of allocations to use the protected software (col. 4, lines 1-14, the license servers for each server); the pool of license server including a current leader server programmed for updating the distribution of allocations to add at least one additional allocation to a particular license server if that particular license server does not have a sufficient number of allocations (col. 4, lines 21-30).

10. As to claim 16, Misra teaches a method for balancing a distribution of allocations for protected software over a communication network, the method comprising the steps of: coupling a pool of license server to the communication network (col. 4, lines 21-30); assigning a distribution of allocations to the pool (col. 4, lines 21-30); coupling at least one client computer to the communication network (col. 4, lines 21-30); and updating the distribution of allocations

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to add at least one additional allocation to a particular license server if that particular license server did not have a sufficient number of allocations in response to a request for authorization received from a client computer (col. 4, lines 21-30).

11. As to claim 18, Misra teaches a method as recited in claim 16, including a step of updating the distribution of allocations further including: selecting one of the license servers in the pool as a current leader server for storing the distribution of allocations for all license servers in the pool as a current leader server for storing the distribution of allocations for all license servers in the pool and for managing a reassignment of allocations to give at least one additional allocation to a particular license server if that particular license server did not have a sufficient number of allocations at any time during processing of a request for authorization received from the client computer (col. 4, lines 9-48).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

12. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

13. Claims 2-15 and 17 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent Number 6,189,146 to Misra et al. in view of U.S. Patent Number 5,752,041 to Fosdick and U.S. Patent Number 5,950,214 to Rivette et al..

14. As to claim 2, Misra teaches a system as recited in claim 1; however Misra does not teach the idea of borrowing licenses from another license server.

Fosdick teaches the idea of borrowing licenses from another licensing server to when the number of licenses falls bellow a threshold value (col. 6, lines 9-34).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the Computer Networking art at the time of the invention to combine the teachings of Misra regarding software licensing with the teachings of Fosdick regarding sharing licenses between servers because distributed licenses reduce network traffic (Fosdick, col. 1, lines 61-17). However, the Misra-Fosdick combination does not teach comparing the quotient of the number of allocations in use divided by the total number and then comparing the quotient to a threshold value.

Rivette teaches comparing a quotient to a threshold value and then performing an action based on that comparison (col. 23, lines 7-38).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the Computer Networking art at the time of the invention to combine the teachings of the Misra-Fosdick combination regarding a licensing system with the teachings of Rivette regarding comparing a quotient to a threshold because a threshold provides a more flexible point for completing an action (col. 23, lines 7-38).

15. As to claim 3, Misra teaches a system where a current leader server further programmed for updating the distribution of allocations to add at least one additional allocation to particular license server if that particular license server did not have a sufficient number of allocations any time during processing of a request for authorization form a client computer (col. 4, lines 9-48).

16. As to claim 4, Misra teaches a system where a current leader server includes a memory for storing the distribution of allocations for all license servers in the pool (col. 4, lines 9-48).

17. As to claim 5, Fosdick teaches a system wherein if a particular license server determines that it does not have a sufficient number of allocations at any time during processing of a request

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for authorization received from the client computer, the current leader server is further programmed for: looking for a source of available allocations by checking a count of available allocations in a free pool, any down license servers, and the leader server; and decreasing the count of available allocations from the source of available allocations and increasing the count of available allocations for the particular license server if the source of available allocations is found (col. 6, lines 9-34).

18. As to claim 6, Fosdick teaches a system wherein a server is programmed to update a distribution of allocations in the pool to all functioning license server in the pool that are not the current leader server through a distribution criteria sync message (col. 6, lines 9-34).

19. As to claim 7, Fosdick teaches a system wherein a current leader server is programmed for storing a new distribution of allocations in response to a change distribution criteria message containing the new distribution of allocations communicated to a license server (col. 6, lines 9-34).

20. As to claim 8, Fosdick teaches a system wherein the license server that are not the current leader server are programmed for communicating the change distribution criteria message to the current leader server if the license server that are not the current leader server should receive a change distribution criteria message and the current leader server further programmed for communicating the new distribution of allocations in the pool to all functioning license servers in the pool that are not the leader server through a distribution criteria sync message (col. 6, lines 9-34).

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21. As to claim 9, Misra teaches a current leader server programmed for adding allocations to a pool in response to an add allocations message containing a count of allocations to be added to a particular protected software communicated to a license server (col. 4, lines 9-48).

22. As to claim 10, it features similar limitations to claim 8 and is rejected for the same reasons as claim 8.

23. As to claim 11, Misra teaches the current leader server further programmed for adding a new license code to the pool in response to an add license code message containing a license code to be communicated to a license server (col. 4, lines 9-48).

24. As to claim 12, it features similar limitations to claim 8 and is rejected for the same reasons as claim 8.

25. As to claim 13, Misra teaches a system where the current leader server is programmed for updating the distribution of allocations to add at least one additional allocation to a particular license server if that particular license server did not have a sufficient number of allocations at any time during processing of an update message received from at least one client computer operating in fail-over mode (col. 4, lines 9-48).

26. As to claims 14 and 15, they have similar limitations as claim 5 and are rejected for the same reasons as claim 5.

27. As to claim 17, it features the same limitations as claim 2 and is rejected for the same reasons as claim 2.

28. Claims 19-29 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent Number 6,189,146 to Misra et al. in view of U.S. Patent Number 5,752,041 to Fosdick.

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29. As to claims 19 and 20, they feature the same limitations as claims 5 and 6 and are rejected for the same reasons as claims 5 and 6.

30. As to claim 21, it features similar limitations to claim 13 and is rejected for the same reasons as claim 13.

31. As to claim 22, Misra teaches a step of updating the distribution of allocations by communicating a change distribution criteria message including: communicating the change distribution criteria message to the current leader server; updating the distribution of allocations in the pool in the current leader server; and communicating the updated distribution of allocations in the pool to all other function license server in the pool (col. 4, lines 9-48).

32. As to claim 23, it has similar limitations to claim 9 and is rejected for the same reasons as claim 9.

33. As to claim 24, it features similar limitations to claim 22 and is rejected for the same reasons as claim 22.

34. As to claim 25, it features the same limitations as claim 11 and is rejected for the same reasons as claim 11.

35. As to claim 26, it features similar limitations to claim 22 and is rejected for the same reasons as claim 22.

36. As to claims 27-29, they feature the same limitations as claims 13-15 and are rejected for the same reasons as claims 13-15.

Conclusion

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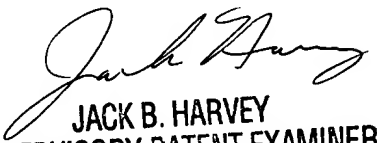
37. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Douglas B Blair whose telephone number is 703-305-5267. The examiner can normally be reached on 8:30am-5pm Mon-Fri.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, David Wiley can be reached on 703-308-5221. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-746-7239.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is 703-305-3800.

Douglas Blair
November 18, 2003

DBB


JACK B. HARVEY
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER